

Sierra Nevada Conservancy-Progress Report

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control River and Coastal Protection Act of 2008 (Proposition 84)

Grantee Name: Resource Conservation District of Tehama County

Project title: Childs Meadows Headcut Design and Environmental Analysis Project

SNC Reference Number: SNC 462.1

Submittal Date: December 31, 2014

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Check one:

☒ **6-Month Progress Report**

☒ **Final Report**

6-Month Progress Reports should reflect the previous six months. Final Reports should reflect the entire grant period.
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A. Progress Report Summary: (Please provide a general description of work completed during this reporting period.) (March 2014 through December 2014)

All CEQA related work components of the Childs Meadows Headcut Design and Environmental Analysis Project was completed during the current reporting period. This included completion of the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) documents and their submittal to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to review agencies for the required 30 day period. A number of comments were received via U.S. Mail and email from review agencies and requested changes were incorporated into the revised Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. A staff report was prepared and submitted to the RCDTC Board of Directors which describes the project and changes that were made to the IS/MND and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) prepared for each project to meet the needs of State agencies. The Tramway Fuel Break Project Staff Report also described changes made to original CEQA documents in order to meet the regiments established in the Lassen National Forest's NEPA analysis. The CEQA document was approved through resolution by the RCDTC Board of Directors at its December 17, 2014 meeting.

Final Reporting Period

At the time of the final reporting period, no project deliverables or activities remain to be completed. The CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated

Negative Declaration prepared for the Childs Meadows Headcut and Stabilization and Repair Project has been formally reviewed by various State Agencies and any comments submitted by reviewers has been considered and in most instances incorporated into the final version of the IS/MND. In addition the document has been reviewed and approved by the Tehama County Resource Conservation District Board of Directors.

B. Deliverables or Outcomes completed during this Reporting Period or Milestones Achieved: (Include specific information, such as public meetings held, agency participation, partnerships developed, or acres mapped, treated or restored.)

In addition to a final IS/MND and MMRP, required Notice of Completion, Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Notice of Determination were completed and submitted to both the State Clearinghouse and the Tehama County Clerk/Recorders Office. At the present time Lassen National Forest personnel are in the process of finalizing its NEPA Environmental Assessment and related Finding of No Significant Impact for this project. Implementation of the Tramway fuel break project is expected to occur during the late spring or early summer of 2015 and will be completed by October of the same year.

Final Reporting Period

All project work and deliverables required under the RCDTCs grant agreement with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has been completed.

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered: (Please describe what has worked and what hasn't; include any solutions you initiated to resolve problems. If your project is not on schedule, please explain why here.)

Final Reporting Period

None noted during the project's period of performance.

D. Unanticipated Successes Achieved: (Please describe any additional successes beyond completing scheduled tasks or meeting scheduled milestones.)

Final Reporting Period

In connection with biological resource surveys conducted during the preparation of the CEQA analysis, CDFW personnel made the observation that the segment of Gurnsey Creek located within the Childs Meadows Head Cut project area contained non-native trout. At the present time RCDTC and CDFW personnel along with staff from The Nature Conservancy are in the process of developing an eradication project to be completed during implementation of project work using future construction funds when these have been obtained.

E. Compare Actual Costs to Budgeted Costs: (Please refer to your grant agreement to list your deliverables/budget categories and budgeted costs compared to actual costs incurred during this reporting period in the table below.)

Budget Reporting Period – March 2014 through December 31, 2014

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	Budgeted SNC \$	Actual Dollars Year to Date
Project Management	1,700.00	1,837.42
Project Accounting	2,100.00	2,169.31
Environmental Analysis	8,362.00	9,056.82
CEQA Filing Fees	2,231.00	2,452.25
Geologic/Geomorphic Consultant	17,000.00	16,346.69
Archeological Consultant	2,500.00	2,153.95
Biological Consultant	500.00	00.00
CDFG Stream bank Alteration Agreement	840.00	00.00
ACOE Nationwide Permit #27	2,000.00	00.00
Monitoring	500.00	00.00
Project Materials and Supplies	400.00	431.04
Administrative Overhead	3,530.00	3,063.01
Total Project Costs	\$41,663.00	\$37,510.49

Explanation: (if needed)

The Project Schedule, Project Budget and Performance Period (Exhibit “A”) was revised and fully executed as of June 4, 2014.

F. Do you have information to report on the project-specific Performance Measures for your project? (If so, please list the Performance Measures below and describe your progress.)

Final Reporting Period

None noted

G. Were there any other relevant materials produced under the terms of this Agreement that are not a part of the budgeted deliverables? If so, please attach copies. (Include digital photos, maps, media coverage of project, or other work products.)

Final Reporting Period

N/A

H. Next Steps: (Work anticipated in the next 6 months, including location and timing of any scheduled events related to the project.)

At the present time personnel from the RCDTC, their consultant Pacific Watershed Associates along with those from The Nature Conservancy are identifying potential funding sources for implementation of the project work described in the CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the head cut project. This collaborative group is also developing a related project to eradicate non-native trout from that portion of Gurnsey Creek within and upstream of the project area in order to protect native riparian and aquatic species including the Cascades frog, a listed species.

Please Complete this Section for FINAL Report ONLY

Capacity-Building Results and Collaboration and Cooperation with Stakeholders:

(What partnerships did you initiate or strengthen as a result of this project? How did they affect the project outcome? If applicable, how did this grant increase your organization's capacity? What is your plan to sustain this increase?)

During the process of developing a construction design to control and stabilize head cutting within a portion of the Childs Meadows complex, the RCDTC utilized the expertise of The Nature Conservancy, its consultant Pacific Watershed Associates and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The information provided by these specialists was invaluable to the level of analysis that was incorporated into the CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration develop for the construction project's future implementation. In addition, it is anticipated that much of the data and information developed in connection with this environmental analysis project will be utilized by the RCD and TNC when completing future watershed restoration and improvement projects within northeastern Tehama County.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. Most Significant Accomplishment

Describe in one concise, well-written paragraph, the most significant accomplishment that resulted from this grant.

With the completion of the design work and environmental analysis for remediation of the Childs Meadows head cut, a major obstacle to implementing positive tangible impacts to the meadow complex has been cleared. Through this environmental analysis process, the RCD, The Nature Conservancy and regulatory agencies understand what has been proposed to solve the head cutting, erosion and related sedimentation problems in that system and can more successfully obtain the necessary construction funding to complete this important meadow restoration and water quality protection project.

2. WOW Factor

If applicable, please describe anything that happened as a result of the project or during the project that is particularly impressive.

During the environmental analysis process, California Department of Fish and Wildlife personnel identified the presence of non-native trout that impact the listed Cascades frog along with other aquatic and riparian species. Through simple modification in the sequence of construction activities, a means to eradicate this species from Gurnsey Creek within and upstream of the project area can now be completed at little or no additional cost to future potential funders.

3. Design and Implementation

When considering the design and implementation of this project, what lessons did you learn that might help other grantees implement similar work?

The RCDTC has completed numerous CEQA environmental documents and has a firm understanding of that process. Consequently no unusual circumstances arose during the development of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the head cut stabilization project other than that mention under item 2 above.

4. Indirect Impact

Please describe any indirect benefits of the project such as information that has been developed as a result of the project is being used by several other organizations to improve decision-making, or a conservation easement funded by this grant that encouraged other landowners in the area to have conservation easements on their property.

During the environmental analysis process and development of the CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document, a considerable amount of environmental information was obtain that will be useful when the RCDTC completes other resource protection and improvement projects in northeastern Tehama County. In addition CDFW personnel who focus on riparian and aquatic species were identified and their expertise will be useful to both the RCDTC and The Nature Conservancy in their future restoration efforts.

5. Collaboration and Conflict Resolution

If you worked in collaboration or cooperation with other organizations or institutions, describe those arrangements and their importance to the project. Also, describe if you encountered conflict in the project and how you dealt with it, or if there was conflict avoided as a result of the project.

None Noted

6. Capacity-Building

SNC is interested in both the capacity of your organization, as well as local and regional capacity. Please describe the overall health of your organization including areas in need of assistance. SNC is interested in the strength and involvement of your board, significant changes to your staff, size and involvement of membership. In addition, describe how your project improved capabilities of partners, or the larger community.

In terms of project work, the RCDTC has a significant portfolio of projects to complete during the upcoming year. Much of this work was developed through the efforts of the RCD's two Department of Conservation funded watershed coordinators. This program will end in April 2015 and as a result, the District could lose some of its ability to develop collaborative conservation projects and prepare funding packages for such efforts. Once this funding source is gone, the RCD will need to expend overhead dollars in order to continue development of collaborative efforts that will impact its ability to use these funds for RCD directed projects. Significant among these efforts has been assisting rural communities with fuel management issues. This work was funded by overhead dollars generated by the RCD's Vegetation Management Program which was developed by one of the DOC Watershed Coordinators.

7. Challenges

Did the project face internal or external challenges? How were they addressed? Describe each challenge and any actions that you took to address it. Was there something that SNC did or could have done to assist you? Did you have to change any of your key objectives in response to conditions "on the ground"?

None Noted

8. Photographs

Grantees are strongly encouraged to submit photos, slides or digital images whenever possible. These images will be used for SNC publications such as annual reports or

on the website. Please make sure you clearly identify location, activity, and your project with each submitted image. Images will be credited to the submitting organization, unless specified otherwise.

See CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document

9. Post Grant Plans

What are the post-grant plans for the project if it does not conclude with the grant? Include a description of the following (if applicable): (1) Changes in operations or scope; (2) Replication or use of findings; (3) Names of other organizations you expect to involve; (4) Plans to support the project financially, and; (5) Communication plans?

All project work for which the Sierra Nevada Conservancy provided funds under this grant agreement has been completed. With the proposed construction project now fully analyzed for environmental impacts and an array of Mitigation Measures developed, the RCD of Tehama County is working with The Nature Conservancy and Pacific Watershed Associates in identifying potential sources of construction funds for implementation of the project work analyzed in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document.

10. Post Grant Contact

Who can be contacted a few years from now to follow up on the project? Please provide name and contact information.

**Victoria Dawley/District Manager
Resource Conservation District of Tehama County
530-527-3013**

SNC-approved Performance Measures: (Please list each Performance Measure for your Project, as identified in your Grant Agreement, and the results/outcomes.)

Performance Measures:

The Grantee shall report on performance measures. The Grantee shall consider the following four quantitative performance measures and report on the ones that relate to this project.

Resources Leveraged in the Sierra Nevada:

The purpose of this performance measure is to measure the additional resources generated as a result of SNC investment. The total value is based on matching funds provided by external, number of volunteer hours, and the value of major in-kind contributions made to a project.

Although the RCD of Tehama County is unable to quantify value, The Nature Conservancy provided staff input and environmental data that was utilized in the development of the CEQA analysis prepared for the Childs Meadows Head Cut project. At the present time the RCD is working with TNC and Pacific Watershed Associates staff in developing funding proposal to implement the construction project described in the CEQA document.

Number and Diversity of People Reached:

The purpose of this performance measure is to measure progress of information-sharing and education efforts and inclusiveness of other project efforts such as plan development.

Once both the CEQA environmental analysis document was prepared, the RCDTC published announcements in local newspapers regarding its availability. In addition the RCDTC filed the CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document with the State Clearinghouse in order for agency and public review to occur. The document was also posted with the Tehama County Clerk/ Records Office for local review as well as the RCD's website which provided additional opportunities for stakeholders to understand the project's scope of work and the environmental analysis that was completed in connection with this effort.

Number and Type of Jobs Created:

The purpose of this performance measure is to measure economic benefits to the Sierra Nevada Region by tracking the full-time equivalent jobs created by SNC-funded activities.

Two RCD project personnel and two TNC administrative staff participated in this project. In addition 4 project staff from Pacific

Watershed Associates as well as personnel from The Nature Conservancy was involved in the environmental analysis that was incorporated into the CEQA document prepared by the RCD.

Number and Value of New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities: The purpose of this performance measure is to measure the types, quantities, and, where appropriate, estimated dollar values of new, improved, or preserved activities, products, and services resulting from the project

The impact of this environmental analysis project and the future construction work to be completed in connection with head cutting in Childs Meadows cannot be quantified. In economic terms as the Childs Meadows complex is a wildland area.

Project Specific Performance Measure

Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project

Implementation: The purpose of this Performance Measure (PM) is to provide a measure of progress in moving SNC-funded projects from initial stages of collaboration and planning to action.

With the completion of necessary environmental analysis and design work, the RCDTC and TNC can move forward with identify and securing construction funding to implement head cut control and stabilization work within the Childs Meadows complex.